



Unit Plan for the Use of Kamishibai Integration of Music & Language Arts for More Meaningful Learning

By Dorothy Kometani Kittaka
Music Specialist, Haverhill Elementary School
Southwest Allen County School Corporation
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Grade Level: For 1st Grade: Pacific Rim Countries are included in their classroom curriculum. This lesson can be used for upper grade levels using different Kamishibai stories. The older students will be able to write their own melodies in groups or as individuals. This lesson is geared for the 1st grader classes at my school.

Goal: To introduce Japanese culture to young children.

Objective: Use The Bamboo Princess Kamishibai story as the basis for the integration of literature and music to teach children about Japanese culture through myths.

Materials: Video of Big Bird Goes to Japan, by Sesame Street Productions, and Kamishibai The Bamboo Princess.

Musical Instruments: Orff Xylophone or piano.

Lesson 1

Objective: Prepare the students with exposure to Japanese culture.

Preparation: Big Bird Goes to Japan, video by Sesame Street Productions.

This contains a fun tour of Kyoto and the plight of Big Bird being left behind on a bus tour. He meets a mysterious Japanese lady, who turns out to be the Bamboo Princess. There is a children's production of the story on the video, which then sets the scene for the Kamishibai version of the story.

As a review of the video, discuss the different ways in which people greet each other and how schools are alike and different from American schools. I teach my students about removing shoes before entering the house. They love to take off their shoes and sit on the floor. We bow in the correct way and greet each other with simple Japanese greeting phrases. I also teach them how to use the chopsticks "o hashi" and give them "arare," rice crackers, to eat, which helps them learn how to use the "o hashi" better. Have the children observe how student dress in Japan today and how they dress in special traditional occasions.

Lesson 2

Objective: Read the Kamishibai story, The Bamboo Princess.

Procedure:

- Introduce the history of Kamishibai in Japan before TV was invented.
- Read the Kamishibai story of The Bamboo Princess.
- Decide where the story could use a song to highlight the movement of the story.

Lesson 3

Compose lyrics and melody to enhance Kamishibai, The Bamboo Princess.

Objective: Each class will select a portion of the story to highlight with an original composition.

Procedure:

- With the teacher writing the ideas of the students on the board, a four-line poem will be written collectively as a class. Use a rhyming pattern where lines 1 and 2 rhyme and 3 and 4 rhyme. Haiku form can also be used, where there are three lines which do not have to rhyme, but will contain 17 syllables on three phrases: 5-7-5. Recite the lyrics and establish a rhythmic pattern, using the natural flow of the words.
- Set up a xylophone in pentatonic scale, do, re, me, sol, la, do; or in the key of C: C D E G A C. (If you have no xylophones, use the black keys of the piano, which are in pentatonic (5-note scale). The pentatonic scale is used because there are no dissonant notes or chords. Any combination of sounds is pleasant to the ear.
- Select or ask for a volunteer to play combinations of notes to go with the lyrics of the song and the class, as a whole, decides on the melody of the first line in the poem. The teacher then writes the name of the notes over the words on the board. Ask for a volunteer for each line and then compose the whole song. Sing the song with the class so they can decide whether they like the phrasing and the notes.
- Discuss with the class what form (AB, ABA, ABACAD) they would like to arrange the song. (The first two songs have a refrain which is repeated at the beginning and at the end making it an ABA form.)

Lesson 4

Perform and record the songs with piano or Orff and percussion instruments.

Objective: Learn ostinatos and other musical accompaniments using percussion instruments.

Procedure: Set up the Orff Xylophones, metalophones and glockenspiels in pentatonic scale.

- Teach some children to play a repeated pattern using C and G played together as a steady beat pattern and use the words, "Bamboo Princess." (ta, ta, ta, ta). Other children may choose a phrase and play a rhythmic pattern using the words, "Went to the moon" to play ta, ti, ti, ta. Music teachers who are familiar with the Orff Method of teaching music will be able to help you in this process. You may just want to play it on the piano or sing it with no accompaniment. Use a gong, cymbal or other percussion instruments to enhance the sound of the accompaniment. (Older children will write out the melody and accompaniment on staff paper or on the computer.)
- Rehearse the piece until you feel it is ready to record.
- Let the children hear the piece and then have them critique it for improvements. Practice again and the revise until you and the class feel that it is ready for the live performance of the work.
- The teacher or student(s) then can read the story and insert the songs for a performance for themselves, their teacher, or other classes or parents.

Evaluation: What did the children learn?

- Review the story itself to see what moral or message it told.
- Discuss the lifeskills it took to go through the process of composing and performing this musical: Cooperation, teamwork, organization, flexibility, patience, etc.
- Discuss what they learned about Japanese culture that they did not know before.

**Original Songs written for
The Bamboo Princess
Song 1:**

THE BAMBOO PRINCESS, by Mrs. Pinkerton's First Grade Class

Bamboo Princess, Bamboo Princess,
Bamboo Princess, who came from the Moon

Bamboo Princess, who came from the Moon
She didn't want to go back to the moon too soon.
Mother and father she did love
Oh, how she missed them from above.

Bamboo Princess, Bamboo Princess,
Bamboo Princess, who came from the Moon

Song 2:

ANGEL'S CARRIAGE, by Mrs. Huffman's First Grade Class

Angel's Carriage, Angel's Carriage
Angel's Carriage, took her away

Bamboo Princess you are beautiful
You could not find a Prince who was suitable
The Emperor asked for her hand in marriage
On the full moon, she was taken in a carriage.

Angel's Carriage, Angel's Carriage
Angel's Carriage, took her away.

Song 3:

THE GIFT by Mrs. Clough's First Grade Class

Her parents were sad when she went to the moon
The angels took her a little too soon
She gave them a potion to live forever and they said never
They took it to Mount Fuji, the mountain that lives forever.

Extended Activities:

1. Have the children write their own story in their regular classroom as part of their creative writing lesson.
2. In their art class, have children illustrate the stories Kamishibai style.
3. Using the model of Kamishibai, any subject can be used to learn and to teach others: science, math, social studies, history, etc.
4. Music is the link to make the story meaningful to the listener and the performer in an emotional way, which words alone cannot convey.

Haverhill Elementary School
4725 Weatherside Run
Fort Wayne, IN 46804
Dorothy Kittaka, Music Specialist
dkkittaka@aol.com